

EXHIBIT E

Timeline of Clashes Between Professor Murray and Defendant CCRI Administration,
Including Defendant Costigan

- February 2017
 - “The Vice President of Academic Affairs at CCRI recently sent out a meeting agenda with “difficult faculty” listed as a discussion item - which was intended for an academic deans’ meeting but went to all department heads - and faculty - instead.” A follow up e-mail is sent out by Steve Murray addressing the email explaining that the agenda item was to debrief a webinar entitled “Managing Difficult Faculty,” which was part of a professional development exercise attended by higher education institutions across the country.
 - See page below 7 (original link: <https://www.golocalprov.com/news/ccri-leadership-targets-difficult-faculty>).
- May 2017
 - At a meeting of the Strategic Planning Committee, Murray made a statement about a sentence in the draft report that Murray disagreed with that dealt with the abilities of “all” students at the College “are motivated, capable and committed to attaining academic achievement.” Before Murray could finish speaking, VP Costigan loudly interrupted Murray, stating that she was repulsed by what Murray said, that Murray was negative, and that Murray did not belong working at the College. She added that Murray does not represent the faculty.” She went on to say “she had heard enough from Murray.” VP Patten who was Chairing the Committee then proceeded to move the meeting forward and by recommending the change Murray suggested be made. Murray filed a complaint with HR for Costigan violating the Policy Against Violence in the Workplace. Almost immediately and before any investigation, President Hughes put out a statement that she fully supported VP Costigan. The College brought in an attorney (Peter Harrington) who is employed in the Administration at URI to conduct an “independent investigation.” His report concluded that there had been no violation of the policy.
 - See below page 8 (July 11, 2017 Email “Update Investigation of VP Costigan”); pages 9 – 10 (May 18, 2017 Letter to Hughes).
- June 2017
 - Student Senate votes no confidence in Hughes and Costigan over treatment of Professor Britton regarding the observatory. Students and faculty (including Murray) picket at the College over alleged mistreatment of the astronomy professor who has overseen the operation of the observatory for the past ten years having his pay reduced.
 - See below pages 11 – 13 (original link: <http://www.rhodybeat.com/stories/ccri-senate-voices-dissatisfaction-with-president-over-observatory,25691>); see below pages 14 – 16 (original link: <https://www.providencejournal.com/story/news/education/2017/07/08/dispute-over-pay-at-ccri-observatory-spurs-protests/19252784007/>).

- August 2017
 - Article in the Providence Journal, “CCRI president rocks the boat with changes aimed at helping students” that contained criticism by Murray of Hughes’ decisions and lack of qualifications. The article also discussed the Student Government’s vote, in June 2017, of No Confidence in Hughes and Costigan.
 - See below pages 17 – 22 (original link: <https://www.providencejournal.com/story/news/politics/state/2017/08/25/ccri-president-rocks-boat-with-changes-aimed-at-helping-students/19145823007/>).
- Fall 2017
 - Hughes and Costigan tried to unilaterally impose a “J-term” which are three week compressed courses. There was virtually no involvement of the faculty in this decision and Murray led the opposition to the implementation of the “J-term” and it did not go forward in 2018. “Several teachers had agreed to teach in the J term until Murray posted his video and subsequently called two faculty meetings, after which the teachers backed out.”
 - See below pages 23 – 25 (original link: <https://www.providencejournal.com/story/news/education/2017/11/08/ccri-suspends-planned-january-term-amid-faculty-union-opposition/17124401007/>).
- October 2017
 - Murray notified Hughes of a potential “nepotism” issue involving hiring the sister of Dean Sabbagh.
 - See below pages 26 – 27 (original link: <https://www.golocalprov.com/news/ccri-faculty-union-head-raises-nepotism-concerns>).
- April 2018
 - Murray was reelected as President of the CCRIFA. On April 28, 2018, Costigan asked to meet with Murray. From the outset of the meeting, Costigan was insulting towards Murray regarding the union election results (Murray had run unopposed and approximately 130 faculty voted for Murray, but Costigan mocked Murray for not getting a “majority” of the approximate 300 faculty eligible to vote). The meeting ended with her screaming at Murray after she misunderstood a comment Murray had made. Murray filed another complaint with HR regarding her conduct and she filed a complaint against Murray. A decision was not issued by HR in response to either complaint.
- Fall 2018
 - Hughes and Costigan again seek to unilaterally to impose a “J-term/Winter session.” There is even greater faculty push back this time than last year.

- November 2018
 - The Union Executive Committee met, and a motion was passed to call for a vote of “No Confidence” in President Hughes, Vice President Costigan, and Dean Sabbagh, due to their continued failures of leadership and that either they resign or be removed. 271 Faculty were eligible to vote, 219 voted, with 160 voting yes to approve the motion of “No Confidence,” 34 voted “no,” and 25 voted to abstain. The overwhelming vote of “No Confidence” received local and national media coverage. Hughes released a statement voicing disappointment and her view that “change is hard.” The Council on Postsecondary Education and Governor Raimondo voiced their strong support of Hughes.
 - See below pages 28 – 29 (original link: <https://warwickonline.com/stories/council-backs-ccris-hughes-in-wake-of-unions-no-confidence-vote,138903>); see below pages 30 – 32 (original link: <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2018/dec/4/faculty-at-ccri-college-vote-no-confidence-in-lead/>).
- January 2019
 - Despite the near complete lack of support from the faculty (full time and adjuncts), Hughes/Costigan went forward with their “J-term/Winter Session” beginning on January 2, 2019. The faculty (led by Murray and others) conducted Informational Picketing, with protest signs, leaflets and bumper stickers, at the College on January 2, 2019 and January 9, 2019. Channel Ten news, Golocalprov, the Providence Journal, and other media covered the story. Murray gave interviews that contained negative comments about Hughes, Costigan, and the J-term/Winter Session.
 - See below pages 33 – 38 (original link: <https://www.neari.org/blog/the-trouble-with-jterm>); see below pages 39 – 40 (original link: <https://www.newportri.com/story/news/local/2019/02/13/ccri-faculty-critical-of-j-term-outcome/6004716007/>); see below page 41 (original link: <https://turnto10.com/news/local/faculty-at-ccri-protest-short-winter-term>); see below pages 42 – 43 (original link: <https://www.golocalprov.com/news/ccri-faculty-picket-following-no-confidence-vote-in-president-hughes>).
- January 22, 2019
 - The day classes start, Hughes notified Murray by letter that his appointment as Department Chair was being terminated by her.
- January 23, 2019
 - VP Costigan sent an email to Murray’s department faculty and copied Melissa Fama (Assistant VP), Dean Busby, and Dina Levitre (assistant Dean) notifying them that yesterday, Hughes terminated the appointment of Murray as department chair. Costigan called for a department meeting to elect a new chair to serve out the remainder of Murray’s term.
- January 23, 2019
 - About 50 faculty members, including Murray, attended a meeting of the Council on Postsecondary Education held at CCRI to object to Hughes’ leadership.
 - See below page 44 (original link: <https://www.golocalprov.com/news/new-ccri-president-strips-leading-critic-of-free-tuition-program-of-departm>).

- January 28, 2019
 - Faculty members of the Department of Criminal Justice and Legal Studies sent a letter to President Hughes asking that she reconsider her decision to remove Murray as chair and express their support of Murray. They make note in the letter of Murray's work ethic, treatment of faculty and staff, and quick response to students' concerns.
 - See below pages 45 – 46 (original link: <https://www.providencejournal.com/story/news/education/2019/01/28/ccri-union-president-demotion-an-obvious-act-of-retaliation/6165761007/>)
- January 29, 2019
 - Murray claims that CCRI President illegally cut his pay after removing him as department chair earlier. He sends President Hughes a letter (in the news article) explaining that he has had no opportunity to respond to this reduction in pay and that Hughes did not follow the proper process.
 - See below page 47 (original link: <https://www.golocalprov.com/news/leading-critic-of-free-tuition-says-ccri-president-slashed-his-pay-illegall/>).
- January 30, 2019
 - Murray sent a Letter to Tim DelGuidice, Chair, RI Office of Postsecondary Council, requesting clarification regarding "Committee of the Faculty" pursuant to 16-33.1-1-3. No response from him.
- February 1, 2019
 - Murray was unanimously re-elected as department Chair.
- February 4, 2019
 - Hughes again terminates Murray as department Chair
- February 13, 2019
 - CCRI calls "J-term" a success despite being questioned by department heads stating that the terms were not as rigorous as typical classes, students received higher grades than normal, and faculty were not asked for input.
 - See below pages 48 – 50 (original link: <https://www.providencejournal.com/story/news/education/2019/02/13/ccri-calls-winter-j-term-success-but-some-faculty-leaders-dont-buy-it/5984324007/>).
- February 13, 2019
 - Approximately 50 faculty (including Murray) attend the meeting of the Office of the Postsecondary Council to protest Hughes leadership. Eight faculty members read parts of a memo detailing Hughes' failure with "J-term".

- February 22, 2019
 - Per the order of Vice President Costigan – Murray’s department holds another election of Department chair with Murray being unanimously elected (again) as Chair.
- February 25, 2019
 - Hughes emails Murray that she has terminated Murray’s appointment as Chair again (third time) based on the allegations detailed in her January 22, 2019 letter to Murray.
- April 25, 2019
 - Murray Chair matter is settled -- MOA signed by Murray with an NDA.
- April 29, 2019
 - President Hughes appoints Murray as Chair.
- March 2020
 - Murray’s term as CCRIFA President is supposed to end in April. Murray agrees (due to covid pandemic) to continue as President until Nov 2022 when CCRIFA will hold an election.
- December 29, 2020
 - The Union representing Education Support Professionals at CCRI vote “No Confidence” in Hughes and Ogden. The “No Confidence” vote Murray led in 2018 is referenced in paragraph 6 of the article.
 - See below pages 51 – 53 (original link: <https://www.golocalprov.com/news/ccri-education-support-professionals-vote-no-confidence-in-hughes-citing-po>).
- June 2021
 - Hughes’ contract is up for renewal – CCRIFA and Support Professionals Union at College write to Council on Postsecondary Education voicing “No Confidence” in Hughes.
 - See below pages 54 – 55 (original link: <https://www.providencejournal.com/story/news/education/2021/06/08/higher-education-council-renews-ccris-president-hughes-contract/7610836002/>).
- Fall of 2022
 - There is a dispute with Murray and Costigan/Stargard regarding course scheduling, overload courses, and their proposed Law Enforcement Certificate.
- February 20, 2023
 - President Hughes re-appoints Murray as Department Chair.
- February 28, 2023
 - Defendants banish Murray.

- March 2023
 - Hughes announces her resignation effective August 2023. No confidence votes are mentioned in articles.
 - See below pages 56 – 57 (original link: <https://finance.yahoo.com/news/ccri-president-meghan-hughes-resigning>).

CCRI Leadership Targets “Difficult Faculty”

Thursday, February 09, 2017

GoLocalProv News Team and Kate Nagle

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The Vice President of Academic Affairs at CCRI recently sent out a meeting agenda with “difficult faculty” listed as a discussion item - which was intended for an academic deans’ meeting, but went to all department heads - and faculty - instead.

GoLocal obtained a copy of the agenda sent for the February 2 meeting, which listed only three other discussion items (see below).

The college administration tried to explain the context, after the fact, but only after some faculty were less than pleased.

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CCRI English Professor Steve Forleo, who is the faculty advisor of the student newspaper, “The Unfiltered Lens,” offered his perspective on the matter.

“Rather amusing to me because ‘difficult’ faculty in higher education appears as common as the army of wildly overpaid, inexperienced educrats,” said Forleo, who has been an outspoken critic of CCRI’s partnership with Goldman Sachs.

College Spin

Following the inadvertent sending of the email to faculty, Vice President of Academic Affairs Rosemary Costigan sent a follow-up email, which was obtained by GoLocal as well.

The email sent on February 3 was as follows:

Dear Colleagues,

As we close out this second week of class, I write to address the email sent by Steve Murray to you all earlier today that included the agenda from this week’s Deans’ Meeting. Item four on that agenda, titled “Difficult Faculty” has generated questions from some of you.

The purpose of that agenda item was for the deans and me to debrief a webinar entitled “Managing Difficult Faculty,” which we watched on Wednesday, February 1. The webinar, hosted by Academic Impressions, was attended by higher education institutions across the country as a professional development exercise.

Its purpose was to provide tools to communicate with faculty in a civil, respectful manner and to ensure that the work of our division is able to move ahead in a positive and productive manner. The link to the webinar is <http://www.academicimpressions.com/webcast/managing-difficult-faculty>, and I encourage you to review that link should you desire further information.

Going forward, I ask that we all commit to engaging with each other in a cordial, collaborative manner. I respect this faculty and believe that together we can work in a collegial way that makes us all better.



CCRI (Warwick Campus)

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AGENDA

ACADEMIC DEANS’ MEETING

Thursday, February 2

10:30 am -11:30 pm

KC – VPAA Office

1. Strategic Planning updates
2. Chairs Agenda
3. Governance process
4. Difficult Faculty

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Murray, Steven

From: Murray, Steven
Sent: Tuesday, July 11, 2017 5:09 PM
To: CCRI Faculty Association
Cc: John Leidecker; Christopher Cobleigh; 'Peter Harrington'
Subject: Update Investigation of VP Costigan
Attachments: Pam Hallene Report re Incident.docx

Importance: High

Faculty Members,

I am writing to give you a brief update of the “investigation” of VP Costigan by the College in regard to the incident at the Strategic Planning Committee meeting on May 12, 2017. The investigation which was begun by CCRI HR is now , as directed by President Hughes, in the hands of an attorney who works at URI, Peter Harrington. I have asked for an independent (due to P. Hughes statement of bias and conflicts of interest re Harrington) investigation by a neutral party and the College has refused. Attorney Harrington has conducted phone interviews of witnesses and has not taken complete written statements from all of the witnesses. I met with him today to answer any further questions he had about the statement I provided HR. He told me VP Patten has provided a written statement to him and that he would provide a copy of that statement to me. He told me that VP Costigan has not provided a written statement to him, but that she has verbally answered questions he asked her – he will not provide me with his questions and her responses. I have asked Attorney Harrington if he will provide me with all of his notes re the questions and answers given by witnesses, and he has told me he will not provide those to me. I again told him that I do not feel that the “investigation” has been conducted fairly nor professionally from the outset.

Attached and below is Professor Pam Hallene’s written statement of what occurred at the SPC meeting (*Pam has given me her permission to make her statement public*):

During the May 12, 2017 Strategic Planning Committee Meeting, participants were asked to review the draft of the Strategic Goals document individually and in small groups and then provide feedback. Steve Murray was the first person recognized by Vice President and Committee Chair David Patten, who presided over the meeting. Steve stated he felt that the word *all* from the draft of the first goal on the page was inaccurately universal and should be changed. He then provided some personal teaching experience and general demographic information as rationale for his position. Immediately, Vice President Costigan interrupted Steve’s feedback and he was thereafter unable to regain the floor to finish his thoughts. She came on very strongly from the outset and the ensuing tirade (that’s all one could call it) escalated from there. She recounted some of her personal teaching experience, intimating that the word *all* was very appropriate, but her retort was directed at Steve personally. She pointed her finger at Steve and, literally, screamed at him for probably 3 to 4 minutes – maybe more. She noted that she was tired of his negativity and eventually, toward the end of the outburst, moved to the point that it was faculty’s responsibility to be sure “all students are motivated, capable and committed to attaining academic achievement,” to quote the language of the document in question. Vice President Costigan asserted that if faculty were not capable of doing this for “all” students, they should not be teaching.

During this incident, I had my hand raised to speak because I was going to make the same point as Steve; however, he had been recognized to speak first because the Chair seemed simply to be systematically beginning with the raised hands closest to his left and then proceed around the table. The point I eventually made was that the word *all* should be removed from the goal statement because it is not *always* the case that 100 percent of the students in a class will or can be “motivated, capable and committed to attaining academic achievement” if only because our rosters are the product of an open-enrollment system, which is undoubtedly a virtue of the institution, but one which also brings pedagogical challenges.

Steve was merely doing what had been asked of the committee members, and Vice President Costigan’s response was unwarranted and shocking.

May 18, 2017

President Hughes,

Your decision to continue to support VPAA Costigan after her outrageous verbal assault on me, at a meeting of the Strategic Planning Committee, last Friday, May 12, 2017, leaves me with no choice but to no longer support you nor your administration. By your decision to continue to have VPAA Costigan represent you and the College, you directly endorse her conduct.

Your senior leadership team (VP Enright, VP Patten and HR/Title IX Director Norton) and the entire SPC Committee witnessed VPAA Costigan's unprovoked and misguided tirade against me for my mere response to a question posed by the consultant (Frank Markley) that was leading the SPC's discussion. My response to his question was the correct one. No one present supported VPAA Costigan's attack upon me wherein she loudly and rudely interrupted me, said she was repulsed by what I had said, that I was negative, that I did not belong working at the College and that I was a poor fit at the College. She also added that I do not represent the faculty at the College and that she had heard enough from me.

At the first meeting of the SPC, the Committee members were told, "Everyone was encouraged to speak freely, be open and objective, and think of the future of the college, in its entirety, not just the area represented by the committee member." (minutes attached) Freedom to speak, without interruption or attack, is an essential part of the free exchange of ideas and opinions that is essential to the life of the College. For VPAA Costigan to not understand and appreciate that bedrock basic principle, demonstrates she is unworthy and incapable of being in a leadership position at the College.

At the meeting on May 12th, the consultant presented a document (copy attached), "CCRI Draft Strategic Goals for SPC Review." The consultant told us he had met the day before, for the first time in the strategic planning process, with the College's "Senior Leadership Team" [President Hughes, VPAA Costigan, VP Enright and VP Patten] and that together they had drafted the three Strategic Goals set out in the document. *(It should be noted this document is not available on the CCRI web page for Strategic Plan documents.)*

The consultant asked the members of the Committee to review the document and comment. After reviewing the document, I raised my hand and was recognized by Committee Chair/VP Patten to speak. I addressed Strategic Goal [One] – "We believe **all** (emphasis added) students are motivated, capable and committed to attaining academic achievement." I said that with twenty four years experience teaching over 12,000 students, that while this statement may be aspirational, and I wished I could agree that **all** students are motivated, capable and committed to attaining academic achievement, that had not been my experience. As I tried to continue to explain my thoughts, VPAA Costigan loudly and belligerently interrupted me, stating that she was repulsed by what I had said, that I was negative, that I did not belong working at the College and that I was a poor fit at the College. She added that I do not represent the faculty. As I tried to speak, she continued to interrupt me. In a belligerent and condescending tone, she told me she had heard enough from me. She said she had been a student at the College and that all students are motivated, capable and committed to attaining academic achievement.

I was shocked by VPAA Costigan's verbal attack and threats against me. As I looked around the room it appeared most members of the SPC had a visceral shocked reaction to VPAA Costigan. Professor Pam Hallene courageously raised her hand and was recognized by Chair/VP Patten. Professor Hallene supported my statement that not all students at the College are motivated, capable and committed to attaining academic achievement.

No one spoke in support of VPAA Costigan nor her position. Likewise, it should be noted that the College's Mission Statement (copy attached) supports what I said, "We meet the wide-ranging educational needs of our diverse student population, building on our rich tradition of excellence in teaching and our dedication **to all students with the ability and motivation to succeed.**" (emphasis added). In an interview you gave (May 19, 2016 to the Johnston Sunrise newspaper), "In speaking with students, Hughes said she found that there were **many** with the "motivation and the drive" to graduate, but they were having trouble seeing a clear path to graduation." (emphasis added)

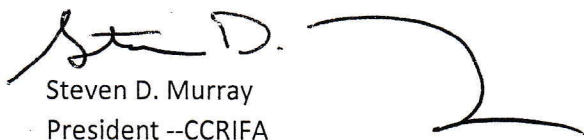
After Professor Hallene spoke, Chair/VP Patten said to the Committee that the "all" language would be removed from Strategic Goal [One]. No one objected to the removal of "all" from the document.

VPAA Costigan's actions at this meeting, and at other meetings evidence a continued ongoing attack on what your Administration describes as "Difficult Faculty" and an ongoing attempt by this Administration to marginalize and ultimately silence faculty representation and shared governance at the College.

As the elected representative of the faculty, I will not allow your (President Hughes and VPAA Costigan) conduct to go unchallenged. With the support of the faculty, the CCRIFA, NEARI, students, staff and the community, we will insure that our voice is heard. While I will attend graduation tomorrow in support of our students, faculty and staff, as President of the CCRIFA, I will not march with you nor sit on the stage with you.

I will continue to speak up for the best interests of the faculty, students and staff that are the true stakeholders of this most important educational institution and speak against the bullying, threats and lack of respect by VPAA Costigan which you endorse.

Sincerely,


Steven D. Murray
President --CCRIFA

RhodyBeat

(/)

CCRI senate voices dissatisfaction with president over observatory



(/uploads/original/20170622-151525-1497980022_0c23jpg)

The CCRI observatory
(PHOTO COURTESY OF CCRI)

Warwick Beacon (/warwick-trending/) · Thursday, June 22, 2017

By Mary Grady and John Howell



A dispute over management of public observatory nights at the Community College of Rhode Island Knight Campus in Warwick has brought to a head conflicts between the student body and the administration, leading to the Student Senate's call for an emergency meeting last week on campus. The meeting, held on Wednesday afternoon, June 14 resulted in votes to censure and express "no confidence" in President Meghan Hughes and Vice President of Academic Affairs Rosemary Costigan.

In a statement issued Monday, the college administration said, "We are concerned that our students have chosen this method to object to issues that have no basis in fact. When the resolutions were received, CCRI President Meghan Hughes and Vice President Rosemary Costigan immediately contacted the president of the Knight Student Government to understand the basis of the students' concerns and the root of this misinformation."

That's not how students see it.

"The observatory issue was pretty much the straw that broke the camel's back," student body president Charles Meserve told the *Beacon*. "The Meghan Hughes administration has had a history of ignoring students, and faculty for that matter. The observatory was a catalyst that prompted that move." Calling a student senate meeting during the summer is very unusual, Meserve said. The meeting drew about two-dozen students.

Student Senator Kacie Hyland introduced a Senate resolution expressing support for the continuation of public open nights at the Margaret Jacoby Observatory and also expressing opposition to the administration's actions to replace Professor Brendan Britton as the observatory's operator. During discussion, the students said Professor Britton had been told his compensation for running the observatory would be reduced, and after he sought advice from the faculty union the administration closed the observatory and then replaced him with a professor from the Lincoln campus, whose specialty is physics, not astronomy. Britton has managed the observatory for 10 years, and "his passion has ignited the drive in students to learn more about Astronomy, in many cases leading to students' decisions to change their majors to astronomy," according to one of the resolutions.

In its statement, the college administration said there are no plans to close the observatory and that more than \$45,000 in renovations have been completed "to modernize the observatory space for our students and the many community members who enjoy our open observation nights."

The statement goes on to say that Associate Professor Britton remains employed by the college and will continue to oversee the operation of the observatory for classes and public outreach.

"Another faculty member in our Physics Department will host our weekly observation nights on Wednesdays throughout the summer, weather permitting. We invite the community to join us at our open observatory nights and will kick off the season at an open house event for the community from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday, July 8."

Students rallied to support Professor Britton, and also to express their overall dissatisfaction about their relationship with the administration. Hyland's resolution passed unanimously. After some discussion about student interactions with administrators, the Senate then voted to censure and express "no confidence" in Hughes and Costigan. "To 'censure' means we're formally

disagreeing...and expressing that we're very unhappy with her actions," Meserve told the Senate. All four "censure" and "no confidence" measures passed with majority votes, several abstentions, and zero "nays."

Meserve said student senate meetings are open to the public and administrators are welcome but they don't come. Since Hughes took office last year, administrators have been generally inaccessible to students, he said.

"When they make decisions, they aren't looking at the interests of the student body," he said.

During the meeting, students discussed several examples of what they considered "frivolous" spending by the administration and were dismayed that they would then cut the compensation of a long-time faculty member.

"The no-confidence vote was for all the behavior exhibited since [Hughes] has been president," not just over the observatory issue, Meserve said.

The administrators and student leaders were scheduled to meet Wednesday afternoon.

Comments

NO COMMENTS ON THIS ITEM PLEASE LOG IN TO COMMENT BY CLICKING HERE (/LOGIN.HTML? REFERER=%2FSTORIES%2FCCRI-SENATE-VOICES-DISSATISFACTION-WITH-PRESIDENT-OVER-OBSERVATORY%2C25691)



Says who? Says you!

Calendar of events

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Special Sections

The Providence Journal

EDUCATION

Dispute over pay at CCRI observatory spurs protests

Alex Kuffner akuffner@providencejournal.com

Published 3:45 p.m. ET July 8, 2017 | Updated 3:46 p.m. ET July 8, 2017

WARWICK -- The Community College of Rhode Island organized an open house on Saturday at its Margaret M. Jacoby Observatory to celebrate the completion of a \$45,000 renovation that included a new control desk, new seating and repairs to the roof-opening mechanism.

“It’s a real gem in a small state,” CCRI spokeswoman Kristen Cyr said of the circa-1978 observatory.

But the event was clouded by a demonstration outside the observatory’s doors by faculty members and students who protested what they allege is mistreatment of the astronomy professor who has overseen operation of the observatory for the past decade.

Holding signs with such phrases as “Nebulous leadership” and “Bad optics,” the group of about two dozen chanted in support of the professor Brendan Britton.

Britton was hired in 2007 to teach astronomy to students and to operate the observatory for his classes and on nights when it’s open to the public. Last month, when the administration changed the way he would be compensated for the public nights, resulting in less pay, he balked.

“It was a breach of the last 10 years of the way I’ve been paid for my work at the observatory,” said Britton who attended the protest. “This effectively amounts to a pay cut.”

After Britton refused the new pay structure, another professor at the college agreed to take over the public nights, which are held on Wednesdays in the summer. Britton said he misses the Wednesday night sessions when parents bring their children in or his students can put their learning into practice.

“This breaks my heart,” he said.

The CCRI Faculty Association and the National Education Association Rhode Island have filed a grievance on Britton's behalf.

The dispute surrounding Britton is reflective of larger tensions at the college that have pitted some faculty and students against the administration.

Last month, the Student Government Senate called an emergency meeting in which it took a no-confidence vote in college president Meghan Hughes and vice president of academic affairs Rosemary Costigan. Student Government president Charles Meserve said the observatory issue was only the latest in a string of problems that resulted in the vote.

"We have meetings and it's like they don't hear us," Meserve said of the administration.

Steven Murray, president of the faculty association, went further.

"Without a change in leadership at the college, many fear that the college will continue in the wrong direction," he said.

In a statement, CCRI responded that the resolutions passed by the Student Senate contained "a number of unsubstantiated allegations about the administration of our college and inaccurate information" about the observatory. Hughes and Costigan have met with the students twice, most recently on Friday, to discuss their concerns, according to the statement.

In regard to Britton, the college cited budget constraints in arranging the new pay structure.

"We know that Associate Professor Britton is well-respected by his students, peers and members of the public who have attended events at the observatory, and we were disappointed we could not come to an agreement about compensation for these non-faculty duties," it said in the statement. "However, as a state-funded institution, we have an obligation to ensure that our programs work within their budgetary limitations and that our limited resources are spent effectively."

Despite the troubled backdrop, the public open house at the observatory went ahead, with a steady trickle of people coming in to see the improvements.

The observatory was built at the urging of Margaret M. Jacoby, a longtime teacher at the college who is now professor emeritus of physics. She brought classes to the observatory and opened it up to the public regularly. The observatory was named in her honor in 1995.

The renovation had been overdue, said Cyr. Although the original 14-inch telescope was replaced in 2009 with a more powerful 16-inch reflecting telescope, much of the interior had remained unchanged since the observatory's construction.

The public nights resumed on June 21 and will continue on Wednesday evenings throughout the summer, weather permitting.

Jack Owens, the physics professor who ran the public nights before Britton and has taken charge again, said that turnout has been strong so far, with visitors getting especially good views of the planets and the moon.

"When you see Saturn in a telescope, that's a real thrill," said Owens, who declined comment on Britton's situation.

Chandra Dash was at the event with her 6-year-old son Henry Barrera.

"We'll definitely be back on a Wednesday night," she said.

But not Chris Gilbert, a CCRI graduate and founding president of the school's astronomy club. He was inspired to study astronomy by Britton and is set to start in the astrophysics program in the fall at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth.

He was at the protest with his two children who he used to bring to the public nights at the observatory.

"I won't bring them now," he said.

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The Providence Journal

STATE

Rocking CCRI's boat

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WARWICK, R.I. — Dissatisfied with what they say is a dismissive response to their concerns about how the Community College of Rhode Island is being run, a group of CCRI students and faculty have taken to public dissent.

Their action comes at a time when the college is moving to improve its students' graduation rates and economic prospects — while implementing Gov. Gina Raimondo's free-tuition plan. Such substantial change, CCRI leaders say, is bound to create tension.

"There's a lack of communication and shared governance between the administration and the faculty, the staff and the students," CCRI Faculty Association president Steven D. Murray, a member of the dissatisfied group, told The Providence Journal. "A problem seems to be that the background of the people who are our leaders now may not be really sufficient to handle the task."

"It just seems like they've given us the runaround," said Charles Meserve, student government Senate president at the Knight campus in Warwick, one of four campuses in the CCRI system. In June, Meserve led a Knight Senate no-confidence vote against CCRI president Meghan Hughes and Rosemary Costigan, vice president of academic affairs.

"We went forward with the motion of no-confidence because we have no confidence that they even care about the student body," said Meserve, who with Murray was among the dozen CCRI students and professors who requested a meeting with The Journal this summer after what they said were failed efforts to resolve differences internally.

In an interview, Hughes, who took office last year, said she and her administration have gone to lengths to work with any teachers and students concerned by new procedures in student course placement, course scheduling, remedial education, administrative hiring and promotion decisions, and other issues.

"From the moment I arrived, the message I sent and then the practice that I implemented was one of open-door transparency," Hughes said. She noted the regular office hours and "small-group faculty meetings" she holds, along with her open forums on all CCRI campuses. Faculty and staff have been involved in planning for change and many have been leaders, she said.

"Change is really hard," Hughes said. "What I want this group that came to you to understand — and everyone at the college — is that I believe so strongly in our faculty. Our faculty have given their lives to teaching our students. I believe so strongly that they can lead us forward as we design the kind of academic offerings that our students require now."

The Council on Postsecondary Education, which governs CCRI, Rhode Island College and the University of Rhode Island, "is fully supportive of President Hughes and her team and the steps they're taking," said council Chairman Bill Foulkes.

"Meghan Hughes as president is a terrifically dynamic, engaging, creative leader," said Foulkes, who with six other council members voted in December 2015 to hire her (two votes were cast against). "She is someone who has the students' interests at heart first and foremost."

Opposition to Hughes was summarized in a May 1 letter signed by 50 "Concerned CCRI Faculty & Staff" and sent to Hughes and the council requesting a private meeting with them on June 7. When that date passed and no meeting had been scheduled, the group contacted media outlets.

"The past year at CCRI has been extremely challenging and distressing for many faculty and staff," the three-page letter read. "Currently, it is difficult for faculty and staff to feel our service is truly valued. We are not interested in praise, but rather in being an integral part of how this institution functions."

According to statistics provided by CCRI, the school employs 292 full-time and 610 part-time faculty and a staff of 435 on four campuses, in Warwick, Lincoln, Newport and Providence.

Many concerns are listed in the letter signed by 50 people, and the group of a dozen teachers and students who met with The Journal elaborated on them during that session and in emails before and after.

"We do not want to obstruct change at CCRI," Michele Seyler, assistant professor of English, said at the meeting. "We all see the need for change, and we want to be part of that process."

But Hughes and her team, Seyler contends, have not been inclusive.

"Too much of the administration, I believe, is in a silo on the Warwick campus, and they don't really know what's going on," she said. "They don't have a clue because they are so busy sitting in their offices and having meetings and reading another study or research paper from this place or that place."

English Prof. Margaret M. Connell said she found the administration's response "very, very upsetting ... I feel we've been dismissed and ignored."

"We don't get included in the decision-making. The students do to a certain degree, but not really that much," said English Prof. Susan E. Apshaga. "It seems to be, the old ... 'top-down.' It's an exclusive club."

A change in how the CCRI observatory is operated and the administration's decision to close the remedial-math program known as Math Lab have been particularly contentious. Math Lab was shut down after a CCRI study showed that the program, which prepared students for enrollment in college-level math courses, had failed when compared to outcomes of students requiring developmental assistance who had enrolled in only a traditional "lecture" course.

"The data showed us that we were failing our students" and wasting faculty time and CCRI dollars in the process, Hughes told The Journal. "When we have data in front of us that tells us it's true, we must react."

The study, published online at <http://bit.ly/2w3VrKB>, indeed shows a dramatic difference across all demographics.

Some teachers said that the decision to close Math Lab was announced and implemented abruptly.

"There was no time to analyze the data, to consult, to do anything," said math professor Joseph W. Crowley. "This is not unusual for them."

Hughes said time was of the essence: by the time the study was completed, students were already enrolling for the next term and needed to know Math Lab would not be an option.

Hughes similarly defended a decision to offer students alternatives to remedial courses in general, which do not earn college credits and can discourage progress toward graduation. Students now can present past evidence of proficiency, such as high-school transcripts, and need not take the Accuplacer test, a more rigid assessment of need and potential.

"We've placed hundreds of students into credit-bearing math and English classes who, without this new system, would not have been placed there — and they performed as well or better than their peers," Hughes said.

Thus motivated, and with credits, students can move more rapidly toward graduation and transfer to a four-year school or placement in a good job, Hughes said.

Like union head Murray, some in the group that met with The Journal questioned Hughes' background. The president holds a bachelor's degree in history from Yale and a doctorate in fine arts from New York University, and came to CCRI after teaching at NYU, Rhode Island School of Design and Tufts, and, most recently, six years as executive director of Year Up Providence.

Faulkes acknowledged that Hughes' experience does not fit the standard model for a college president — but said her success at Year Up, which grew and improved under her tenure, eminently qualified her to lead CCRI in a new direction. The council, he said, sees her as a needed change agent.

Hughes says she has studied the history of CCRI, founded in 1964 as a junior college, and of other community colleges in the United States and concluded — as the council and Raimondo also have — that the school, while fulfilling its mission of open access, has more work to do in a new mission of preparing more students for transfer to schools such as RIC and URI, where they can earn the degrees seen as a requirement for jobs that will lift graduates into the middle class.

She cited the three-year graduation rates for "first-time, full-time, degree-seeking freshman," which rose from 12.6 percent in 2010 to about 17 percent today — five points below the national average of 22 percent.

"I am confident that if we stay on the path we're in right now, focused on that completion number, we will see significant improvement," she said, adding that "it will take a solid three years."

Improvement has already been demonstrated, she said, and has been built upon work already underway when she took office.

"So much of what I and the team have elevated at the college — its roots were already here," she said. "There was excellent, innovative work being done in many cases by very seasoned

faculty. I think our role was simply to identify it as work that mattered, that needed to be prioritized and supported and implemented."

Foulkes said "the group signing [the May 1] letter and the Knight campus Senate no-confidence vote do not represent the majority of teachers, students and faculty at CCRI."

That is Hughes' view as well. Still, like Foulkes, she said contrarian positions matter.

"I believe the group that came to [The Journal] is a part of our community that is struggling the most intensely with the change that is underway at the college," she said. "I believe that if we challenge ourselves to sit down openly at a table and genuinely commit to working together in order to serve our students, we can do it."

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CCRI by the numbers

15,101 Students enrolled

14,350 Degree-seeking

751 Non-degree seeking

8,901 Female

6,200 Male

8,755 White

3,032 Hispanic

1,375 Black

739 Two or more races

472 Asian

29% 19 and younger

34% 20 to 24

23% 25 to 34

9% 35 to 44

5% 45 and over

SOURCE: Fall 2016 Enrollment Demographics, CCRI

EDUCATION

CCRI suspends planned January term amid faculty union opposition

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Published 9:55 a.m. ET Nov. 8, 2017 | Updated 2:50 p.m. ET Nov. 8, 2017

WARWICK, R.I. — Faced with opposition from faculty union leadership, Community College of Rhode Island president Meghan Hughes on Wednesday morning temporarily suspended registration for a planned new January term that would have allowed CCRI students an opportunity to earn extra credits.

Modeled after similar “compressed” courses already established at the University of Rhode Island, Rhode Island College, and community colleges in many other states, the so-called “J-term” offerings are seen by Hughes and her administration as a way to improve the school’s 5-percent two-year graduation rate, which lags behind similar schools elsewhere in the United States.

The three-week J term, Hughes asserts, is also necessary to meet the legislative requirements of the state’s free-tuition scholarship program for CCRI, the Rhode Island Promise.

“Everybody benefits from the J term,” Hughes said. “It matters for the Rhode Island Promise students and it matters for all of our students.”

But CCRI Faculty Association president Steven D. Murray, in a YouTube video posted a week ago, objected.

“The college has unilaterally decided to offer courses in developmental math, developmental English, a course in human anatomy, all very difficult courses to accomplish in 15 weeks, let alone three weeks,” he said.

“The faculty who teach these courses tell me that to try to compress them into three weeks is academically unsound. They have similar J terms at other colleges, but our student population is very different than those other colleges. And we want to do what’s best for our students.”

Hughes counters that long experience at other community colleges has demonstrated the success of “three-week intense offerings. The completion rates from around the country are higher than the traditional term,” she said.

She also disputed Murray’s contention that the J term was “unilaterally” planned and scheduled, calling that assertion “fundamentally incorrect.” She said CCRI Vice President for Academic Affairs Rosemary Costigan, who led the planning, “worked with the [department] chairs to design the J term, including the courses that would be offered.”

In a communication Wednesday morning to the CCRI community announcing the suspension, Costigan wrote that “academic leadership engaged frequently with our faculty while planning the Winter Session.” She stated that “on more than one occasion” she invited Murray to discuss the J term, but that he “declined to schedule a meeting.”

Last month, the faculty union “made a request to bargain. On Oct. 26, we met and delivered a proposal that reiterated our position that participation was voluntary and limited to full-time faculty who would be compensated at the overload rate for teaching, which would not count against the overload cap. I have yet to receive a response to this proposal.”

The “overload,” or overtime rate, according to CRI, is \$87.50 an hour. Several teachers had agreed to teach in the J term until Murray posted his video and subsequently called two faculty meetings, after which the teachers backed out, according to Costigan’s Wednesday communication.

“Because just this week faculty have withdrawn from teaching in the Session, we currently lack a sufficient number of instructors to run it,” Costigan wrote.

According to Hughes, the proposal “was this is voluntary, it will not affect your standing, will not affect your spring ‘overload.’ So this is completely voluntary. Should you choose to earn extra money in January, you will be paid at the ‘overload’ rate.”

Hughes told The Journal: “My hope is that union leadership responds to our vice president’s proposal and that we can move a program forward that is proven both in Connecticut and in Massachusetts and all over the United States to serve community college students — all of them, including developmental students — well.

“I fundamentally believe that our faculty believe in educating our students, that care about graduating our students, and this is the way to do it.”

Late Wednesday afternoon, Murray issued a statement saying "we appreciate that President Hughes acknowledged the faculty's concerns regarding a J-Term at CCRI and has agreed to suspend the proposal" and noting that the union "filed an unfair labor practice against CCRI on October 25" for what it alleges was a violation of its contract.

"As the faculty of this college," Murray wrote, "we refuse to put our students' education at risk in order to fulfill a political promise."

The J term dispute follows a summer protest against the Hughes administration led by Murray, some other teachers and some students. Among the concerns then were what Murray described as "a lack of communication and shared governance between the administration and the faculty, the staff and the students."

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CCRI Faculty Union Head Raises Nepotism Concerns

Tuesday, November 14, 2017

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The head of the Community College of Rhode Island Faculty Association (CCRIFA) is questioning the college hiring the sister of a CCRI Dean -- and raising the speculation of nepotism.

Steve Murray with the CCRIFA recently inquired with the administration about the hiring of Joyce Sabbagh Perry to the faculty of the Administrative Office of Technology, which is headed by her brother, Dean Thomas Sabbagh.

According to CCRI, the college hired Sabbagh as Dean in June 2017, **after he served in the role on an interim basis since January 1.**

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The head of the CCRI faculty union is raising nepotism concerns with the administration.

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"I'll be writing to [Vice President Rosemary] Costigan as to specifics of the purported arrangement she has and why she never sought an ethics advisory opinion," said Murray, of the response he received.

Latest a CCRI

The battle marks the latest for CCRI faculty association and the college.

As GoLocal was first to report in October, CCRIFA took issue with the recently proposed January term, which CCRI backed off from but not without controversy.

"The Community College of Rhode Island announced that in 2018, it is instituting a "January Session" as an interim academic period -- which the CCRI Faculty Association (CCRIFA) has blasted, claiming that faculty were

not included in the decision process," GoLocal reported on October 16.

CCRI recently reversed its decision to hold the term.

On October 31, Murray wrote the following to CCRI President Meghan Hughes.

President Hughes,

It has come to my attention that Dean Sabbagh's sister, Joyce Perry, is employed this semester at the College as a full-time temporary faculty member (eligible for benefits) in the department of Administrative Office Technology. As you know, Dean Sabbagh is the dean that supervises that department. Please explain this situation to us.

On November 10, Murray followed up with the following:

President Hughes,

It has been ten days since I raised this issue with you and you have offered no explanation or response. Both the Board of Education and the State of Rhode Island have ethics rules that prohibit "nepotism."

Costigan responded to Murray with the following.

"I am writing in response to your email to the President regarding Dean [sic] Sabaugh and his sister. Tom and I have a protocol in place that provides an alternate chain of command regarding any personnel action involving his sister, which provides that any such action that would normally be taken by her Dean is taken and determined by me. We believe that this addresses the issue that you have raised," wrote Costigan.

CCRI and Costigan did not respond to request for comment on Monday.

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Council backs CCRI's Hughes in wake of union's no confidence vote

Posted Tuesday, December 11, 2018 2:13 pm

By **JOHN HOWELL**

Their positions have been made clear.

In a vote tallied last Monday, the union representing the faculty at CCRI overwhelmingly approved a no confidence vote in college President Meghan Hughes. Then, days later, the Council on Postsecondary Education unanimously backed Hughes.

What happens next is unclear. CCRI Faculty Association President Steven Murray did not return calls after a union meeting Wednesday evening. On Friday, a spokeswoman for the council said there are no new developments.

But while the future is uncertain, there's no ambiguity as to what triggered this flare-up in differences of opinions between the faculty and the administration. At issue is the administration's plan to implement a three-week winter term starting in January.

In a telephone interview early last week, Murray said department directors had not been consulted on the courses to be offered, adding, "They're bad courses offered in this format." He said Vice President of Academic Affairs Rosemary Costigan is selecting people to teach courses without consulting department chairs.

Murray said in an effort to "deflect" attention from the issues raised by the faculty, President Hughes is looking to blame the unrest on the failure of the parties to reach a contract and faculty resistance to change.

"This is very harmful, detrimental change and she knows it," Murray said.

In a statement issued following the vote, Hughes said she is committed to advancing the progress made by CCRI and that working with Costigan and faculty and staff the college is "piloting new approaches based on nationally-tested best practices."

"We are seeing results – last spring the college achieved its highest graduation rate in nearly twenty years, and we awarded the highest number of degrees and certificates in twenty years. Even with these accomplishments, I understand that our work has brought change. Change, coupled with open contract negotiations, can be hard, and I believe that this vote reflects our ongoing effort to define who we are as a college and who we want to become," she says in a statement.

According to the office of Postsecondary Education, the contract with the CCRI Faculty Association expired in June, but the sides continue to talk and they have not reached an impasse. In a statement issued after the no confidence vote, Tim DelGiudice, chair of the Postsecondary Education Council, said, "The council has been working collaboratively with the CCRI Faculty Association throughout the contract negotiation process, and we are hopeful that an agreement can be settled as soon as possible, as we have recently done with CCRI part-time faculty, Rhode Island College and the University of Rhode Island."

DelGiudice cited achievements under Hughes' leadership, listing the highest three-year graduation rate in nearly 20 years; a 10 percent increase in college credentials; securing the two largest philanthropic gifts in the college's history and the highest nursing exam pass rate in the state.

"We unequivocally support President Hughes, recognizing the transformative impact of the reforms she has put in place since becoming CCRI president in 2016. We are confident that she and her team will continue to build on that success," he said.

Murray said the parties are still negotiating. He added that the union has filed an unfair labor practice complaint with the state Board of Labor Relations for "surface bargaining and bad faith bargaining."

In part, the no confidence motion calls for the removal of Hughes, Costigan and Dean Thomas Sabbagh for failing their leadership roles to the detriment of students.

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"Murray said in an effort to "deflect" attention from the issues raised by the faculty, President Hughes is looking to blame the unrest on the failure of the parties to reach a contract and faculty resistance to change."

And the vote of no confidence is also an effort to deflect attention away from the issue which is your negotiations. It is a well-known tactic used by unions to force an issue.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2018 REPORT THIS (/REPORT_ITEM.HTML?

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Faculty at CCRI college vote no confidence in leadership

By Associated Press

Tuesday, December 4, 2018

WARWICK, R.I. (AP) - The faculty union at the Community College of Rhode Island cast a no confidence vote Monday in school President Meghan Hughes.

Associate professor Barbara Leasher tells The Providence Journal via email that 219 of 271 eligible voters submitted ballots in the vote. The motion passed 160-34, with 25 abstentions.

The motion said Hughes and other administrators have “repeatedly failed in their leadership roles at the college to the detriment of our students,” and “lack the competence and demeanor required to fulfill their leadership roles” and should be removed.

The union is upset with the administration’s decision to introduce a winter term, which faculty say was poorly planned and lacked their input.

The college says it wants to offer the winter session to help students graduate on time. Hughes said in a statement that she’s disappointed the union chose to advance the vote and she’s committed to improving the community college.

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“Change, coupled with open contract negotiations, can be hard, and I believe that this vote reflects our ongoing effort to define who we are as a college, and who we want to become,” she said.

Last year, Democratic Gov. Gina Raimondo unveiled a plan to offer free tuition at the state’s three public colleges. Lawmakers scaled that back and a pilot program was launched at the school.

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Raimondo wholeheartedly supports the work that Hughes and her leadership team are doing to strengthen the community college’s academic program, Josh Block, Raimondo’s press secretary, said Tuesday.

Hughes has no plans to step down and the winter session is proceeding as planned, college spokeswoman Kristen Cyr said Tuesday. Hughes became the fifth president of the school in February 2016.

Information from: The Providence Journal,
<http://www.providencejournal.com>

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MEMBER VOICE

The Trouble with JTerm

January 24, 2019

A CCRI faculty member's thoughts on JTerm

Program Brief: CCRI's Trouble with J-Term 2019

Prepared for the Community College of RI Faculty Association

by Anonymous Faculty Member

January 17, 2019

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[I. The Problem: A Three-Week Compressed Term that Included Developmental Courses](#)

The focus of this brief is on the 2019 January term (J-term), which was scheduled by Community College of Rhode Island administration without the research-based input and relevant experience of faculty. This issue is an excellent example of the conflict between the current college administration and the faculty. To many faculty members' dismay, the administration continues to push its own narrative that college leadership is successfully implementing new programs while being obstructed by a group of dismissive professors who resist change, regrettably voted No Confidence in administrators, and most recently, refused to teach courses during a three-week J-term. Faculty's continual "opposition to J-Term, a project forced on the college by the administration that broke norms of shared governance, involved dubious processing of paperwork in relation to the Curriculum Review Committee, and portends an erosion of an educational institute in Rhode Island that has been a major pillar for working class, African American, and Latinx students for decades" (Stewart, 2019). In fact, all stakeholders (e.g., students, faculty, staff, taxpayers, PEC, legislators,

etc.) should be as weary as the faculty is about the negative results of problems created by the current administration, as this brief will demonstrate.

II. Lit Review: Research into the J-term for Developmental Courses at Community Colleges

A review of the literature focused on compressed terms, which are courses that meet the hourly requirements of typical semester-long classes but in shorter time frames, and developmental coursework demonstrates why CCRI faculty had initial concerns about the administration's quickly rolled-out J-term. To clarify, developmental education supports the academic and personal growth of underprepared college students through instruction, counseling, advising, and tutoring ("**Welcome**"). Specifically, current research from a variety of fields would discourage enrolling in a three-week term to any student who enters community college needing developmental coursework in one or more academic subjects (i.e., reading, language, writing, math, study skills). According to reputable studies from between 2010 and 2018, compressed terms for developmental courses proved beneficial to many students in community colleges when terms were at least five-weeks long, with an optimal duration of eight-weeks (**Boeding**, 2016; **Ganga**, 2018; **Kops**, 2014; **Sheldon and Durella**, 2010; **TYCA**, 2014). Unfortunately, the administration seems to be misusing research about students in college-level courses and ignoring research about students in developmental courses in a way that serves their agenda as evidenced by the three developmental English courses offered during this winter term (that the full- and part-time faculty refused to teach).

Contrary to the administration's position that faculty is adverse to change, CCRI's faculty is not against improving the curriculum, adding a winter term, or pursuing innovative methods. Additionally, most faculty members are not necessarily against the concept of a three-week J-term in general because research *has* shown that compressed terms encourage program completion for college students in credit-bearing courses (Aguilar, 2004; Anastasi, 2007; Birkholz, 2004; Furr, 2012; Kucsera & Zimmaro, 2010; Lutes & Davies, 2013; Van Scyoc & Gleason, 1993). This body of research points to reasons why winter terms at schools like Rhode Island College and the University of Rhode Island are successful. Each of the three RI state institutions of higher education is different, and "the difference is manifest in the character of the institution. RIC began as a teacher training school before expanding into a wider number of subjects. Their class sizes are limited to below 35 students and the pedagogy is defined by more traditional liberal arts norms. By contrast, URI [a land grant and sea grant institution] is a research institution with much larger class sizes" (**Stewart**, 2019). CCRI's character as an institution is defined by the ways the school meets the needs of a uniquely diverse population. Students needing remediation through developmental coursework are a major part of this student population. According to the CCRI's Office of Institutional Research and Assessment, in the fall of 2014 about 65 percent of the 1,469 full-time, degree-seeking students (953 in total) "were placed in one or more developmental courses" ("**Does Developmental Placement Affect On-time Completion?**" 2018). This percentage is similar to national trends, which in 2010 saw "[a]bout 60 percent of incoming [community college] students...referred to at least one developmental course...[Therefore, a]ddressing the needs of developmental students is perhaps the most difficult and most important problem facing community colleges...[as these students] face tremendous barriers" (**Bailey and Cho**, 2010). To reiterate, CCRI is unlike RIC and URI, which do not offer developmental courses. Those institutions select students based on ability and achievement. So, the RIC and URI winter terms (and all their other terms) do not have to consider, for example, the needs of students requiring remediation in order to be placed in credit-bearing classes. Such developmental classes, for those who need them, are readily available at CCRI, where there are few barriers to enrollment. CCRI does enroll students with the ability and determination to complete a credit-bearing, three-week J-term, and if faculty had been part of a more responsible planning process that would have considered applicable research about appropriate courses for compressed terms, many CCRI faculty members would have encouraged students to enroll and would have gladly signed up to teach during J-term.

III. CCRI Faculty: Open To Effective Change and Ideas that Work for All Students

In media statements and email responses to students, the administration states that faculty is resistant to change. However, by the nature of their jobs, CCRI faculty continually embraces change to provide effective instruction. Typical activities in the lives of professors includes revising coursework, finding new, relevant materials, researching and proposing new courses, implementing new methods, participating in conferences to share and/or learn about new pedagogy, and publishing original work that contributes to their fields. Faculty supports change, but not the kinds of unsound change that can hurt students, that can impede faculty's ability to provide the most efficacious instruction, and that can affect the reputations of both CCRI and those who answer for the work that goes on within its walls. Because they are open to effective change, faculty would most likely support a winter term had it been developed and implemented with research-based methods and in a manner that actually considered the expertise of skilled faculty in the process. However, the wider community of taxpayers, students, higher education overseers, and legislators (who authorized the terms of RI Promise, which seems responsible for the attempts to rush students through coursework), should realize that CCRI must constantly address the issue of the large number of high school graduates needing developmental coursework when arriving at the college's classroom doors. In addition, faculty must also consider and try to address the challenges facing English Language Learners and students with disability conditions, among others who could have been impacted by the hastily-conceived J-term.

The faculty is not against a compressed semester; it is clear that the CCRI faculty supports six-week compressed summer sessions at CCRI. These summer courses are helpful options for students in both credited and developmental classes looking for effective instruction and a shorter road to completion. As a result of sound planning and collaboration between Academic Affairs and faculty in past administrations, some courses are not offered during the summer because they would not work in a six-week period. And like those compressed summer sessions, our Accelerated Learning Program (ALP) is an effective, research-based practice proven to help students needing developmental classes move through the curriculum more quickly and successfully by taking co-requisite classes. ALP was started as a faculty initiative at the Community College of Baltimore County in 2007 and "has consistently produced dramatic improvements in student success rates" for students in developmental coursework ("**ALP**"). While ALP is still a relatively new program to CCRI, overall, most faculty members have embraced this approach and eagerly attend meetings to learn new strategies and stay current with developments in the program. In the English Department, for example, the ALP coordinator and ALP English faculty often bring up any issues and work hard improve its ALP and tailor it to the CCRI student population. The math department ALP faculty has worked hard to implement this program, having to balance faculty flexibility and benefits to students with many of the curricular changes foisted upon them.

It is important to state that many folks on the faculty have chosen careers at CCRI because of its **mission**; CCRI professors believe in access to post-secondary education and believe that education is the key to upward mobility and a more enriching life and society. Therefore, the faculty works tirelessly to design, facilitate, and improve courses, applying the best methods to support students in their quests for success. What does *not* work for many on the CCRI faculty is the current administration's misuse of research (**Fenton**, 2018) and misleading data reporting (**Nagle**, 2018) to support their unilateral curricular decisions with no input from faculty, many who have spent years teaching, have completed advanced or terminal degrees, have published scholarly work in their fields, and have valuable insight into CCRI's diverse student population. The faculty has twice registered its lack of confidence in the administration's eagerness to push forward with an agenda that ignores best practices, cherry-picks talking points out of context, and refuses to consider truly innovative, research-based approaches.

Whether it is incompetence, a desire for praise, lack of both experience and understanding of community college administration, a desire for the power to install friends and political allies of the college and state administration into high-paying positions, or a combination of one or more of these options, the fact remains that the current administration of CCRI is using taxpayer money for ineffective programs that diminish the benefits of CCRI, the largest community college system in New England, to all enrolled students (**DePetro**, 2019; **Forleo**, 2019). The results of this

administration's poor choices will be brought to light eventually. When it is shown that many of the current administration's initiatives only benefit a few students and simply appease the political ambitions of those in power, when students retention rates do not increase, and when student program completion time does not decrease, those on the state level who have stood behind the current CCRI administration will certainly be viewed as complicit in funding and supporting an avoidable failure, a failure that the faculty has warned about. Twice. And this faculty--the lowest paid professors who put in the most classroom hours at a RI public college--will remain, providing the same kinds of support, challenge, training, and education that has been provided since 1964 ("Our History"). CCRI is too valuable to the Rhode Island community, which is why the faculty is steadfast in its opposition to this current administration.

IV. No Confidence in J-term: Faculty Concerns about the Lack of Shared Governance

According to the college's website, CCRI follows "a shared governance model...[which] is a set of processes and procedures through which college faculty, staff, and administrators collaborate in making recommendations about issues of college-wide importance in the following areas: Academic, Business, Facilities, Institutional Planning, Student Affairs, and Technology" ("College Governance"). It is an expectation that makes it frustrating and demeaning to watch policies and programs introduced with little, if any consultation with faculty. Burns (2010) claimed that community college students spend most of their on-campus time in the classroom. Instructors spend the most time involved with student learning, and instructors also spend the most time with students of all those employed by the college. Therefore, when Tinto (2012) postulated that the classroom is the center of the educational experience and the place to focus on success, perhaps the administration could also begin their work by looking *into* classrooms, not just calling on faculty to fulfill political agendas.

It has long been accepted that "[c]urriculum approval processes reflect the collective will of...[an] entire college as an accredited institution, encompassing all the rigor, privileges, and obligations that come with being fully accredited. The primary responsibility for curriculum rests in the hands of faculty" (ASCCC year). Faculty members need to be closely involved in the development of the curriculum that they are responsible for delivering. Faculty does understand shared governance, and does not see shared governance as a way to micromanage administrations or reject any new initiatives. Faculty just wanted to have a voice in curricular changes, especially if the changes would be detrimental to CCRI students.

V. Recommendations: Evidence-based Practices and True Shared Governance

The faculty's position has received encouragement from and positive coverage in GoLocalProv, which named the CCRIFA as one of the "18 Who Made a Difference in 2018". Also the news coverage in Uprise RI and in other outlets has gotten our story out there. Any some faculty members, including the CCRIFA leader Steve Murray and the writer/English Department faculty member Steven Forleo, have appeared in the local media representing the Faculty Associate's concerns. What J-term needed was evidence-based practices and true shared governance. However, that time has passed. The current administration, namely Meghan Hughes, Rose Mary Costigan, and Dean Thomas Sabbaugh, do not seem to have faculty, and therefore students', best interests in mind, and they should be replaced with administrators with experience and integrity, not just with the desire to score political points and add as many high-paying positions to allies.

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LOCAL

CCRI faculty critical of 'J-term' outcome

Linda Borg lborg@providencejournal.com

Published 12:17 p.m. ET Feb. 13, 2019 | Updated 12:20 p.m. ET Feb. 13, 2019

WARWICK — While the Community College of Rhode Island is calling its new winter session a success, some department heads are complaining that the courses weren't as rigorous as typical semester-long classes, that students received unusually high grades and that faculty members weren't asked for their input.

One department chairwoman questioned whether the rush to implement a compressed winter term, called a "J-term," was aimed at getting more students enrolled in the Rhode Island Promise program to graduate in two years.

"I'm disappointed that the administration chose to move ahead without having made an effort to engage the faculty about what courses would be offered and how they would be offered," said social sciences chair Leslie Killgore. "This was not a collaboration. It doesn't represent our best effort."

Faculty have opposed the three-week January session since its inception and they blocked the offering last year. In November, four department chairs — math, English, social studies and business administration — told college administrators that they wouldn't participate in the winter session, which is commonly offered at community colleges across the country.

The English department chairwoman Christine M. Fox wrote that it would be academically unsound to teach these courses "without thorough review, discussion and endorsement by the department."

Killgore, in a separate email, wrote that the majority of her faculty felt that these courses should not be offered in the absence of a collective-bargaining agreement. The faculty union is in contract negotiations.

CCRI President Meghan Hughes in November said, "We have hundreds of students across the college who would be able to graduate this spring or summer by completing one additional classes this winter."

She said the J-term would be good for Rhode Island Promise students, among others. Promise is an initiative of Gov. Gina Raimondo that offers recent high-school graduates two years of free tuition if they attend CCRI full-time and maintain a 2.5 grade point average.

CCRI said 12 of 19 winter courses were offered online. The policy requires all online courses to contain, at minimum, the same components of a traditional classroom course, according to CCRI spokeswoman Amy Kempe. She said 47 percent of winter session instructors have a doctorate.

But Raymond Kilduff, chairman of the psychology department, called the general psychology course offered during the winter session a "gut course," because it didn't cover the breadth of material typically offered in a regular session. He also said that the administration didn't allow him to review the curriculum, nor did it permit him to evaluate the instructors, none of whom were CCRI faculty.

Of the more than 250 students who completed one of the 19 courses offered in person or online, CCRI said 90 percent received a C or greater, a pass rate significantly higher than the same courses offered during the fall and spring semesters.

But Kilduff said that is an apples-to-oranges comparison. He said that half of the students who took general psychology had taken the course before, not because they had failed, but because they wanted a higher grade to get into an applied health major.

"These were better students to begin with," he said.

"I can think of four different reasons for those grades and none of them are good," he said. "First, these are better students ... they are not the Promise students. Second, the college hired people who lowered the standard, so they made the course easier. Third, there was no oversight, and fourth, the weakest students dropped out."

Faculty at CCRI protest short winter term

by FRANK MARADIAGA, NBC 10 NEWS | Wed, January 2nd 2019, 12:44 PM EST



Faculty at CCRI protest the short winter term at the Warwick campus. (WJAR)



WARWICK, R.I., (WJAR) — Members of the faculty at Community College of Rhode Island protested on Wednesday against a short winter term starting this week.

The 12-day term is touted by the school's administration as a boon for the student body, but the CCRI Faculty Association says the winter intercession term is, in reality, a disservice to the students.

"This intercession, which will fail the very students it purports to serve, illustrates the greater failure of President Hughes' leadership," the CCRIFA said in a statement released by the National Education Association of Rhode Island.

According to the association, the faculty passed a vote of No Confidence against CCRI President Meghan Hughes in early December.

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The president contends the winter session gives students the opportunity to accrue credits towards graduation.

"We know that winter sessions are a nationally proven strategy to support our students' success," Hughes said in the statement earlier this week.

Yet the faculty association says the session was hastily developed without their input.

"It is intuitive to nearly everyone that you cannot do in 12 days what is typically done in 15 weeks," said the CCRI Faculty Union in its statement.

The association said about 50 members showed up to Warwick campus to picket the session.

Later on Wednesday the administration responded by saying it was "disappointed" in the union's actions, but that it would not derail the term.

"Today's action by members of the faculty union will have no impact on operations at CCRI," said the statement.

CCRI says that more than 330 students are participating in 21 subjects during the winter session.

The winter session courses are scheduled to run through January 17.

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Goodness Squat 20 sec



55-60

DAY 1
Gate Press 24 sec
Bent Press 20 sec
Goodness Squat 20 sec
DAY 2
Dynamic Plank 20 sec
Downward Dog 20 sec
Carnel Press 40 sec
DAY 3
Goodness Squat 20 sec
Puppy Press 40 sec
Carnel Press 40 sec
Goodness Squat 20 sec



60-65

DAY 1
Dynamic Plank 20 sec
Puppy Press 20 sec
Carnel Press 20 sec
DAY 2
Downward Dog 20 sec
Carnel Press 40 sec
Gate Press 24 sec
DAY 3
Downward Dog 20 sec
Carnel Press 40 sec
Leg Raises 60 sec
Goodness Squat 20 sec



65+

DAY 1
Tabe press 20 sec
Bent Press 20 sec
Goodness Squat 20 sec
DAY 2
Dynamic Plank 20 sec
Gate Press 24 sec
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DAY 3
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CCRI Faculty Picket Following No Confidence Vote in President Hughes

Thursday, January 03, 2019

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Members of the Community College of Rhode Island Faculty Association (CCRIFA) held an informational picket on the Warwick Knight Campus on Wednesday in protest of the college's "J-Term" -- and following a [vote of no-confidence in December in CCRI President Meghan Hughes](#).

According to CCRIFA President Steve Murray, over 50 faculty members took part -- and plan to picket again next Wednesday.

CCRIFA Statement

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Murray issued the following statement to CCRIFA members following Wednesday's picket.

"Following the overwhelming vote of No Confidence in CCRI President Meghan Hughes and her administration earlier last month, the CCRI faculty are protesting the launch of the winter intercession (JTerm) at CCRI. This intercession -- which will fail the very students it purports to serve -- illustrates the greater failure of President Hughes' leadership.


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CCRI faculty picketed outside the Knight Campus on Wednesday.

(Photo: Steve Forleo)

Not only was the intercession developed in rushed fashion without the input of the faculty, it was, in fact, created by President Hughes after rejecting the concerns of the faculty over the efficacy of the 12-day semester.

It is intuitive to nearly everyone that you cannot do in 12 days what is typically done in 15 weeks. But for President Hughes it is what looks good more than what is good.

It is a shame that when President Hughes eventually moves on – and eventually she will – she will have done a great disservice to the students of CCRI and to the institution itself.”

We will picket again next Wednesday, January 9th, beginning at 8:30 a.m.

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NEW: CCRI President Strips Leading Critic of Free Tuition Program of Department Chair

Wednesday, January 23, 2019

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The head of the Community College of Rhode Island Faculty Association — who has been an outspoken critic of the implementation of Governor Gina Raimondo's "Rhode Island Promise" free college tuition program — has been removed from his position as Department Chair, according to an email sent to colleagues.

Late Tuesday night, CCRIFA President Steve Murray -- **who had called for CCRI President Meghan Hughes' resignation in December after the faculty voted no-confidence** -- sent the following email, after he said he had been informed of Hughes' decision.

Faculty Members,

GET THE LATEST BREAKING NEWS HERE -- SIGN UP FOR GOLOCAL FREE DAILY EBLAST

Please be advised that today (January 22, 2019), I received a letter (via email) from President Hughes informing me that she has decided, effective immediately, to remove me as chair of my department for alleged failure to fulfill my duties as department chair. She states that her decision is based upon allegations contained in a memo prepared by VP Costigan and a memo prepared by Dean Busby. In summary, the basis of their allegations are that I have failed to properly assign adjunct faculty per the adjunct contract and deans instructions, and that my behavior at meetings has been insubordinate and unprofessional.

These allegations are without merit and I have not been provided any hearing or other basic due process opportunity to contest these allegations. Before President Hughes made her decision, she did not contact me nor offer to hear my response to the allegations.

In my twenty six years at the College, I have never been disciplined at any time for any reason. I have spoken with the faculty in my department and I have their full support and confidence.

I have notified John Leidecker at NEARI and appropriate legal action will be taken on my behalf.

Sincerely,
Steve Murray

CCRI responded with the following on Wednesday.

"It is the policy of CCRI not to comment on personnel-related matters. Any actions taken by the college are in accordance with the requirements of the collective bargaining agreement with the CCRI Faculty Association," said CCRI spokesperson Kristen Cyr.

Latest at CCRI

In October, Murray criticized the results of the first year of the free college tuition program.

READ: Head of CCRI Faculty Union Says Raimondo's "Free College" Students Not Ready, Not Succeeding

"From what we have in this 'Enrollment Update' -- 38% of the RI Promise students failed to return for year two -- and of those that did return, we haven't yet been told how many of the returnees failed to complete the first year successfully," said Murray, "I wouldn't call RI Promise a success or a good use of the taxpayers money."

"I can't imagine that of the 62% that returned that they all completed 30 credits with a 2.5 GPA. When the College finally chooses to release these numbers, I believe we will see that many RI Promise students did not successfully complete their first year," said Murray.

"I don't think I would have offered free tuition and the other financial incentives they are giving to these students. I don't see how it encourages academic responsibility and accountability, and it sends the wrong message to the majority of our students who are not eligible for RI Promise, that they are somehow not as important to the College and the State as those who are given the free money," said Murray. "Perhaps the money would have been better spent on preparing the 65% of high schools students who enroll at the College and are not ready for College courses, to begin with."

And as GoLocal reported January, after filing an Access to Public Records Act request, less than 45 percent of the students met the minimum standards of 30 credits and the 2.5 GPA to receive free college tuition in year two.



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CCRI President Meghan Hughes (pictured) has stripped the leading critic of the CCRI's free college tuition program of his department chair.

Related Slideshow: CCRI Promise Report March 2018

The Providence Journal

EDUCATION

Union president: Demotion 'obvious act of retaliation'

Linda Borg lborg@providencejournal.com

Published 9:38 a.m. ET Jan. 28, 2019 | Updated 7:31 p.m. ET Jan. 28, 2019

PROVIDENCE — The president of the faculty union at the Community College of Rhode Island has been removed as department chair, an action he says was in retaliation for his work as union president.

Steve Murray had led the opposition to a three-week January academic session, known as a J-term. Several department chairs said the term was not academically sound because it compressed too much instruction into a few weeks. CCRI vowed to go ahead with the session, and said it would use part-time faculty if necessary.

The faculty members of the Department of Criminal Justice and Legal Studies sent a Jan. 28 letter to President Meghan Hughes asking that she reconsider her decision to remove Murray as chair.

The letter says that Murray has worked "diligently and tirelessly and has earned our complete and unwavering support and respect."

The faculty members also wrote that Murray has always responded immediately to students' concerns, treated all students, faculty and staff with respect, and encouraged faculty members to express their opinions and responded professionally.

Murray, in an email to The Journal, said he was notified of his removal as department chair on Jan. 22, effective immediately. He said it was based on allegations made in a memorandum by Dean Bruce Busby and Vice President Rosemary Costigan.

He said he has taught at the college for 26 years and holds the rank of professor of criminal justice and legal studies. During his tenure, he said he has never been disciplined by CCRI.

"The allegations made by Dean Busby and VP Costigan are baseless," Murray said, "an obvious retaliation for my work on behalf of our students, staff and faculty ... it will not go

unchallenged."

When asked if Murray was removed because of his union activities — including his comments to the news media — college spokesman Amy Kempe denied it. She said the action was in accordance with the requirements of the collective-bargaining agreement with the CCRI Faculty Association.

"CCRI faculty and staff have the freedom and right to express their personal opinion to the media," Kempe said in a statement Friday.

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Leading Critic of Free Tuition Says CCRI President Slashed His Pay Illegally as Retribution

Friday, February 01, 2019

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The head of the Community College of Rhode Island Faculty Association — who has been an outspoken critic of the implementation of Governor Gina Raimondo's "Rhode Island Promise" free college tuition program — is claiming that CCRI President Meghan Hughes illegally cut his pay, after removing him as Department Chair.

As GoLocalProv.com first reported, CCRIFA President Steve Murray said on January 23 that he had been removed from his position as Department Chair, following a no-confidence vote in Hughes by faculty members in December.

Now, GoLocalProv.com has learned that Murray reported to colleagues on Thursday that his total compensation has been reduced, without due process.

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CCRI, Most Students Failed to Achieve Minimum Standards

Data secured by GoLocal through an Access to Public Records Act request unveiled that most students in the program failed to meet the minimum standard to receive free tuition in their second year.

"There were 722 students who received state funding through the Rhode Island Promise Scholarship program in the fall 2017 Rhode Island Promise cohort. Of those 722 students, 323 hit the required 30 or more credits and 2.5 or higher GPA mark by the end of their first year," reported CCRI to GoLocal.

Less than 45 percent of the students met the minimum standards of 30 credits and the 2.5 GPA.

Murray's Letter to Hughes

Murray sent the following letter to Hughes -- and cc'ed colleagues -- on Thursday.

President Hughes,

My assistant, Loren Calabro, just handed me a copy of an email thread that contains an email from Dean Busby to her dated today (Thursday, January 31, 2019, 10:02 am) wherein he instructs her "to adjust Professor Murray's load [compensation]. He should be at 9 credits SE and 6 credits at NS."

I have not received any notification from anyone that my compensation is being reduced, nor any explanation, nor any chance to respond to an allegation, nor any due process hearing.

The Contract, Article X, C., 1, clearly states that: "No faculty member will, however, be suspended, dismissed, or reduced in rank or compensation without due cause." (emphasis added)

Have you initiated "disciplinary" proceedings against me? Please provide the "just cause" that you allege supports discipline.

Article X, C., 1, provides a process for "Fair Discipline and Discharge." You have not followed that process and you are taking my property/compensation without following the law nor the contract.

What you are doing is illegal and in retaliation for my work as President of the CCRIFA.

Please rescind the Dean Busby directive immediately.

Steven D. Murray

President -- CCRIFA

Murray provided more commentary Thursday evening.

"As a faculty member my teaching workload is 5 courses per semester. As a Department Chair, my faculty workload is reduced by 4 courses per semester to compensate me for the extensive responsibilities associated with being a department chair," said Murray.

"SE refers to state employment-- courses that are part of my regular workload. NS refers to non state employment -- courses that are referred to as 'overload'," said Murray.

"As a result of what they are doing, they are reducing my compensation by about \$10,000.00 this semester without any notice or due process in violation of state and federal laws and our contract," added Murray.

According to Murray, and state records, earned \$82,586.92.

CCRI did not respond to request for comment on Thursday evening.



CCRI President Meghan Hughes

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CCRI faculty taking part in a recent "informational" picket.

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The Providence Journal

EDUCATION

CCRI calls winter 'J-term' a success, but some faculty leaders don't buy it

Linda Borg lborg@providencejournal.com

Published 10:43 a.m. ET Feb. 13, 2019 | Updated 5:07 p.m. ET Feb. 13, 2019

WARWICK — While the Community College of Rhode Island is calling its new winter session a success, some department heads are complaining that the courses weren't as rigorous as typical semester-long classes, that students received unusually high grades and that faculty members weren't asked for their input.

One department chairwoman questioned whether the rush to implement a compressed winter term, called a "J-term," was aimed at getting more students enrolled in the Rhode Island Promise program to graduate in two years.

"I'm disappointed that the administration chose to move ahead without having made an effort to engage the faculty about what courses would be offered and how they would be offered," said social sciences chair Leslie Killgore. "This was not a collaboration. It doesn't represent our best effort."

Faculty have opposed the three-week January session since its inception and they blocked the offering last year. In November, four department chairs — math, English, social studies and business administration — told college administrators that they wouldn't participate in the winter session, which is commonly offered at community colleges across the country.

The English department chairwoman Christine M. Fox wrote that it would be academically unsound to teach these courses "without thorough review, discussion and endorsement by the department."

Killgore, in a separate email, wrote that the majority of her faculty felt that these courses should not be offered in the absence of a collective-bargaining agreement. The faculty union is in contract negotiations.

CCRI President Meghan Hughes in November said, "We have hundreds of students across the college who would be able to graduate this spring or summer by completing one

additional class this winter."

She said the J-term would be good for Rhode Island Promise students, among others. Promise is an initiative of Gov. Gina Raimondo that offers recent high-school graduates two years of free tuition if they attend CCRI full-time and maintain a 2.5 grade point average.

But Michele Seyler, an assistant professor in English, said an accelerated term is not a good match for students taking remedial courses.

"This administration seems to equate faster and cheaper with better," she said. "This president has no leadership skills. She doesn't ask for our input."

She also questioned the preponderance of As in a couple of English department classes.

CCRI said 12 of 19 winter courses were offered online. The policy requires all online courses to contain, at minimum, the same components of a traditional classroom course, according to CCRI spokeswoman Amy Kempe. She said 47 percent of winter session instructors have a doctorate.

But Raymond Kilduff, chairman of the psychology department, called the general psychology course offered during the winter session a "gut course," because it didn't cover the breadth of material typically offered in a regular session. He also said that the administration didn't allow him to review the curriculum, nor did it permit him to evaluate the instructors, none of whom were CCRI faculty.

Of the more than 250 students who completed one of the 19 courses offered in person or online, CCRI said 90 percent received a C or greater, a pass rate significantly higher than the same courses offered during the fall and spring semesters.

"Students who self-select condensed terms tend to be highly motivated and focused on completion, which is reflective of the grades they earned," said college spokeswoman Amy Kempe.

But Kilduff said that is an apples-to-oranges comparison. He said that half of the students who took general psychology had taken the course before, not because they had failed, but because they wanted a higher grade to get into an applied health major.

"These were better students to begin with," he said.

"I can think of four different reasons for those grades and none of them are good," he said. "First, these are better students ... they are not the Promise students. Second, the college hired people who lowered the standard, so they made the course easier. Third, there was no oversight, and fourth, the weakest students dropped out."

CCRI said all of the winter session instructors had extensive experience teaching at the community college and four-year college level and in online learning space.

The college also said that in August, the faculty union asked the administration not to engage in winter session discussions except for recommendations on the courses.

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CCRI Union Votes No Confidence in Hughes, Citing “Poor Management”

Tuesday, December 29, 2020

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The union representing education support professionals at the Community College of Rhode Island has voted no confidence in President Meghan Hughes and Vice President Alix Ogden, citing recent layoffs.

“While 16% of our members' jobs have been eliminated, high-level administrator positions have ballooned on your watch,” wrote Michael McNally, President of the CCRI Educational Support Professionals Association (EPSA) in a letter to Hughes and Ogden.

SEE LETTER BELOW

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“Our members are the lowest paid employees at CCRI, yet we have been the most severely impacted from your administration’s poor institutional management,” McNally continued.

NEARI Executive Director Bob Walsh acknowledged that some of the workers eliminated have been shifted to the Department of Health — but he questioned the moves.



Meghan Hughes. Photo: GoLocal

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"For the first time ever they laid people off at CCRI, many of whom are now working over at Department of Health," said Walsh. "But there's no guarantees of those jobs."

Latest No-Confidence Vote

In 2018, the head of the CCRI faculty union called for Hughes -- and others in administration leadership -- to "step aside," after 82% of voting CCRI Faculty Association (CCRIFA) members voiced "no confidence" in Hughes.

As GoLocal reported, the move marked the latest in friction between Hughes and CCRI faculty.

In June 2017, GoLocal reported, "Over 50 CCRI Faculty Call Hughes' Leadership 'Challenging and Distressing'" -- and the following month, Hughes "Criticized Faculty for Negativity."

Hughes' Response

CCRI provided the following response from Hughes

"As a result of the pandemic and a significant decline in our enrollment revenue, which accounts for more than half of our overall funding, CCRI has faced unprecedented financial pressure. In response, the college instituted extensive cost-saving measures to bring the budget into balance. These steps included a reduction in pay for senior administration staff, a freeze in filling non-critical vacancies, consolidation of course offerings, a reduction in overtime, support for the Council on Postsecondary Education's decision to not provide budgeted salary increases for Council employees, and negotiated deferrals of salary increases for some bargaining units.

While these measures helped mitigate the financial impact caused by the pandemic, they were not sufficient to solve for the totality of the college's significant fiscal challenges. As a result, the college made the very difficult decision to lay off 122 part-time employees and a number of full-time employees including Council employees, members of the CCRIPSA, and members of the CCRIESPA.

This has been a very challenging time for our college community and our state, and we have had to make very difficult decisions that have negatively affected our employees. Our approach to managing this crisis has always been based on transparency and preserving the institutional health of the college while causing the least possible harm to our community."

Updated December 29 1:56 PM



December 17, 2020

Meghan L. Hughes
President
Alix R. Ogden
Associate Vice President Administration
Knight Campus
Community College of Rhode Island
400 East Ave
Warwick, RI 02886

Re: CCRI ESPA Vote of No Confidence

Dear President Hughes and Vice President Ogden,

As president of the local union representing education support professionals at the Community College of Rhode Island, I feel obliged to inform you that our membership overwhelmingly voted in agreement that we have no confidence in your ability to effectively lead our community college.

Our members are the lowest paid employees at CCRI, yet we have been the most severely impacted from your administration's poor institutional management. While 16% of our members' jobs have been eliminated, high-level administrator positions have ballooned on your watch.

These workers you have chosen to eliminate from our college community, are the first people the students see or speak to when they come to CCRI or inquire about attending. We are the people processing student applications for enrollment, registering and scheduling students for their placement tests, assisting with their financial aid, scheduling them to meet with academic advisors, registering them for their classes, helping them with prerequisite and class-capacity overrides in all academic departments, helping them set up their MYCCRI accounts and all other technology needs.

We are the workers who ensure the students have the correct books and supplies, we keep the campuses clean and safe, and we set up and maintain all academic labs. We give assistance, lend an ear, or offer comfort to students seeking guidance. We are often the first face of CCRI that a student will see in the morning and the last face they see when they leave at night.

Dr. Hughes and Ms. Ogden, to regain the confidence of the CCRI ESPA members, you must engage in dialogue with the union to discuss the cost savings you desire without slashing jobs. Additionally, you must assure the workers who were reassigned to the Department of Health – who answered the call to serve during this public health crisis – that they have jobs to which they can return. Finally, we ask that you treat the entire membership with the dignity and respect we deserve.

Sincerely,

Michael McNally
President, CCRI ESPA

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The Providence Journal

EDUCATION

Higher education council renews CCRI's president's contract for three years



Linda Borg

The Providence Journal

Published 6:52 p.m. ET June 8, 2021

PROVIDENCE — Meghan Hughes, president of the Community College of Rhode Island, received a three-year renewal of her contract Tuesday night.

The Council of Post-Secondary Education unanimously approved her contract after meeting for an hour in executive session.

The vote came despite strong opposition by the faculty union, who recently penned a letter to council chairman Tim DelGuidice claiming she has ignored their concerns and refused to collaborate.

Both the faculty union and support professionals issued a vote of no confidence in Hughes last year.

Members of the council, however, praised Hughes, who arrived in 2016, for the transformational change she has brought to the college, highlighted by the free scholarship program called Rhode Island Promise.

More: McKee wants to make RI Promise free-tuition program permanent

"We just codified the Promise program," DelGuidice said, referring to a recent vote by the legislation to make the program permanent. "This is the result of her leadership."

Council member Rachelle Green said in numerous conversations with faculty, students and business leaders, a consensus emerged that Hughes has their enthusiastic support.

"She is mission-driven," Green said, adding that CCRI has seen "dramatic improvement" under her leadership.

Details of the contract will now be negotiated by DelGuidice.

More: McKee signs bill to make 2-year free community college permanent

More: High-level hires at CCRI raise lawmakers' eyebrows

More: CCRI lays off 122 part-time employees as part of cost-slashing due to pandemic

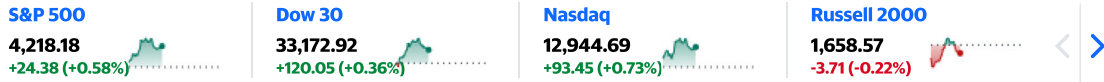
In a letter to DelGiudice last week, the faculty union and two other unions wrote that management relations are strained across CCRI's campuses.

"As you know the Faculty Association and the Education Support Professionals Association both voted no confidence in President Hughes. These votes were not taken lightly and only after multiple failed attempts to be heard by this administration," the letter said.

"Overall, we feel disrespected and unheard," the letter said. "The Hughes Administration has shown no regard for the professional knowledge and expertise of the faculty and staff. Decisions are made impacting students without seeking the input of the individuals who interact with students daily."

Asked about the proposed contract Monday, Walsh declined to comment, saying that "We are always in dialogue" with the college administration.

Linda borg covers education for the Journal.



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The Providence Journal

CCRI President Meghan Hughes resigning her post. What we know.



Providence Journal Staff

March 16, 2023 · 1 min read



Community College of Rhode Island President Meghan Hughes is leaving the college at the end of August, CCRI spokesperson Amy Kempe confirmed Thursday.

Hughes is not running for office or taking a job at another college, Kempe said, and instead will be "taking a pause" to rededicate time to her mother and her family after leading the college for seven and a half years.

More:[Higher education council renews CCRI's president's contract for three years](#)



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CCRI President Meghan Hughes

Hughes last received a [three-year contract renewal](#) in June 2021 over strong objections from the CCRI faculty union. The faculty union and support professionals issued a vote of no confidence the previous year.

Hughes has been the president of CCRI since 2016 and was the [first female president of the college](#). At the time of her appointment, she cited growing graduation rates as one of her top priorities. Before that, she taught art history and then headed Year Up Providence, a nonprofit agency that connects young adults with jobs.

This article originally appeared on The Providence Journal:
[CCRI President Meghan Hughes resigns](#)